



Washington Update

April 7, 2006

Welcome to my Washington Update, an e-mail newsletter for the constituents of California's 29th Congressional District. Through these quick-read updates, I hope to keep you informed of progress being made in Washington, D.C. and at home on public policy issues of interest to our communities.

House Seeks to End Genocide in Sudan

The House passed the Darfur Peace & Accountability Act (H.R. 3127) this week to implement strong measures against the Sudanese government for the murder of hundreds of thousands and the displacement of millions more. Civil war has been fought in Sudan for more than two decades, but since 2003, the Sudanese government has enabled lawless militias to devastate its Darfur region through looting, torture and killings. Around 6,000 African Union peacekeeping troops have been overwhelmed by continuing large-scale ethnic violence against innocent civilians.

H.R. 3127 expands existing sanctions to force Sudanese officials to end their complicity in the genocide in Darfur. The bill blocks the assets of militia commanders, seeks to deny port access for Sudanese oil tankers, better assists the African Union troops, boosts humanitarian support and calls for heightened U.N. attention to what Undersecretary General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Egeland called the "world's worst humanitarian crisis."

To read the text of Congressman Schiff's floor statement on Darfur, [click here](#).

Schiff Fights to Protect Local Jobs From the Threat of Intellectual Property Theft

As a Co-Chair of the Congressional International Anti-Piracy Caucus, Rep. Adam Schiff spoke at a Capitol Hill press conference about the need to stem the piracy of copyrighted material in Russia and China.

It is estimated that the piracy that occurs in these two countries cost U.S. industries \$4 billion in 2005 alone, undermining the security of millions of American jobs. These two countries were identified because of the depth and scope of the piracy that takes place there. Anti-piracy advocates like Schiff urged the Administration to use every tool necessary to compel these countries to confront this growing problem.

"The workproduct of many hard-working Americans is being stolen, and our entire nation is being put at a comparative economic disadvantage," Schiff said. "The United States must exercise its influence with Russia, China and other nations to take comprehensive action against global piracy."

House Seeks Release of Vietnamese Democracy Activists

After a half-day trial in Hanoi in 2003, a political activist named Dr. Pham Hong Son was sent to prison by a Vietnamese court. Dr. Pham was arrested for translating a U.S. article entitled "What is Democracy?" and sending it to senior communist party officials and his friends. Sentenced to five years in prison and six years of house arrest, Dr. Pham, who is in poor health, is being held in solitary confinement. This case is not unique; Vietnam continues to repress any progressive dialogue through the imprisonment of religious and democratic activists who through peaceful means seek to build a more free society.

This week, the House passed a concurrent resolution that condemns Dr. Pham's detention and calls for the release of all of Vietnam's political prisoners. The measure also calls for Vietnam to allow diplomats and the international media into regions of its country where human rights violations are occurring.

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